

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 180556Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0110
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCOCUL HONG KONG
USLO PEKING
USUN NEW YORK 813

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 1769

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, KN, KS, CE

SUBJ: NORTH KOREAN VISIT TO SRI LANKA

REF: COLOMBO 1479

1. NORTTDKOREAN VICE MINIWKPR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LEE JONG-MOK, VISITED SRI LANKA APRIL 11-13. LEETTPA ACRZTZNIED BY LI DO-SUP, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION CHIEF FOR SOUTH ASIA, AND KIM JAE-WONG, NORTH KOREAN EXPERT ON NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. THERE WAS NO PREPARED SCHEDULE FOR VISIT AND VISIT RECEIVED SCANT PUBLICTY. ON ARRIVAL DAY, NORTH KOREANS PAID COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HAD ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS SUBSTANTIVE MEETING WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, AND ATTENDED DINNER GIVEN BY DEPUTY MINISTER. REMAINING DAYS WERE DEVOTED TO SIGHTSEEING.
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2. WHEN NORTH KOREANS REQUESTED VISIT, THEY INDICATED TWO TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION: (1) THE KABUL NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE COMMITTEE (NACC) AND (2) RE-ESTABLISHING THEIR DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN COLOMBO. HOWEVER, THEY DID NOT BROACH REOPENING OF MISSION. ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, NK'S SAID THEY WANT TO COOPERATE WITH SRI LANKA AND IMPROVE RELATIONS AND TO HAVE

CLOSER CONTACT AND GREATER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE ON WHAT THEY HAD IN MIND.

3. SRI LANKAN MFA OFFICIAL WHO ATTENDED MEETINGS SAID THAT NK'S APPEARED WORRIED ABOUT KABUL NACC MEETING. THEY HAD COPY OF KABUL AGENDA BUT ASKED TO COMPARE IT WITH SRI LANKA'S BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT CONVINCED THEIRS WAS CORRECT. NK'S WERE CONCERNED THAT SOME COUNTRIES MIGHT SUGGEST SOME NAM STATUS FOR SOUTH KOREANS AT KABUL MEETING, SUCH AS GUEST. SRI LANKANS INFORMED THEM THAT ONLY ONE COUNTRY, DJIBOUTI, WILL BE ADMITTED AT KABUL.

4. NK'S DID NOT MENTION POSSIBILITY OF KOREAN ISSUE BEING RAISED AT KABUL MEETING. HOWEVER, THEY WRE EMPHATICALLY AGAINST TWO KOREA POLICY AND SOUGHT SRI LANKA'S VIEWS ON KOREAN ISSUE. SRI LANKA DEPUTY MINISTER TOLD THEM THAT SRI LANKA SUPPORTS JULY 4, 1972 KOREAN STATEMENTS CALLING FOR NO OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND FOR SOLUTION OF KOREAN ISSUE THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS.

5. NK'S ALSO TOUCHED ON TEAM SPIRIT 78 MILITARY EXERCISE IN SOUTH KOREA, SAYING THAT IT HAD CAUSED GREAT ANXIETY AND BROUGHT PENINSULA TO BRINK OF WAR. SRI LANKA MFA OFFICIAL SAID THAT NORTH KOREA HAD EARLIER ASKED SRI LANKA TO CIRCULATE OTE TO NAM COUNTRIES PROTESTING EXERCISE. SRI LANKA REFUSED AND EXPLAINED REASONS AT NAM MEETING IN NEW YORK. NORTH KOREANS CONFIDENTIAL

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INDICATED THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH SRI LANKA'S REFUSAL TO CIRCULATE NOTE.

6. COMMENT: SRI LANKA MFA OFFICIALS APPARENTLY DO NOT TAKE NORTH KOREAN VISIT SERIOUSLY. VISIT CAME ABOUT HAPHAZARDLY THROUGH NORTH KOREAN APPRAOCHES TO THREE SRI LANKAN MISSIONS ABROAD, NEW DELHI, NEW YORK, AND GENEVA. SRI LANKANS FULLY EXPECTED NK'S TO REQUEST TO BE ALLOWED TO REOPEN MISSION HERE. THEY ARE PERPLEXED ABOUT WHY SUBJECT WAS NOT RAISED AND CONCLUDE THAT NK'S WERE ON AN EXPLORATORY MISSION TO TEST THE CLIMATE, BUT FOUND THAT NOW IS NOT AN OPPORTUNE TIME FOR THE REQUEST.
WRIGGINS

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NNN

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